Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 13958 141115Z

12
ACTION EUR-25

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RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03 IO-14 DRC-01 /076 W
---------- 017487
R 141020Z SEP 74
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2504
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
USMISSION BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BONN
USMISSION NATO
AMCONSUL MUNICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 13958

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, GW, UR
SUBJECT: ETHNIC GERMAN HOLES UP IN FRG EMBASSY

1. SUMMARY. A MEMBER OF THE ETHNIC GERMAN MINORITY IN THE SOVIET UNION SPENT FOUR DAYS HOLED UP IN THE FRG EMBASSY SEPTEMBER 9-13 BEFORE VOLUNTARILY AGREEING TO LEAVE. HIS ACTION WAS PART OF AN ORGANIZED ATTEMPT BY THE GERMAN MINORITY TO DRAMATIZE THEIR CASE BEFORE THE GROMYKO VISIT. THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY PROTESTED TO THE FRG EMBASSY,CHARGING THAT IT HAD TAKEN HIM IN AND HAD THEN PUBLICIZED THE INCIDENT. HOWEVER, THE FRG EMBASSY'S CORRECT TREATMENT OF THE MAN, AS WELL AS HIS VOLUNTARY DEPARTURE BEFORE THE GROMYKO VISIT, MAY KEEP THE INCIDENT FROM CLOUDING THE VISIT--BARRING, OF COURSE, A PUBLIC FUROR IN THE FRG. END SUMMARY.

2. ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, FNU WAHNSIEDLER, A SOVIET CITIZEN OF
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 13958 141115Z

GERMAN ORIGIN--WHO APPARENTLY LOOKED GERMAN ENOUGH TO FOOL THE

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

MILITIAMEN GUARDING THE FRG EMBASSY--SLIPPED INTO THE EMBASSY AND SAID HE INTENDED TO STAY. HE SAID, IN PERFECT GERMAN, THAT HE HAD COME TO THE EMBASSY AS PART OF A PLAN DEVISED BY A GROUP OF ESTONIAN ETHNIC GERMANS, AND THAT THE GROUP WANTS PUBLICITY, CONSIDERING THAT IT HELPS THEIR CASE. HE SAID HE WOULD NOT LEAVE THE EMBASSY AND WOULD HAVE TO BE THROWN OUT (HE APPARENTLY EXPECTED THIS TO HAPPEN). HE SIAD HE HAD BEEN IN CONTACT WITH SAKHAROV. HE SAID THE TIMING OF HIS VISIT TO THE EMBASSY HAD BEEN CHOSEN BECAUSE OF THE FORTHCOMING GROMYKO VISIT TO BONN. THE IDEA WAS TO DRAMZTIZE THE PLIGHT OF THE ETHNIC GERMANS IN THE SOVIET UNION. HE HAD A VYZOV INVITATION AND STATEMENT OF SUPPORT) FROM RELATIVES IN WEST GERMANY. HE SAID THAT HE HAD TWICE ASKED THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES FOR EXIT PERMISSION AND BEEN REFUSED.

3. FRG EMBOFFS TOLD WAHNSIEDLER THAT HE COULD NOT STAY IN THE EMBASSY. ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, AS THE EMBASSY WAS PREPARING A NOTE INFORMING THE FOREIGN OFFICE OF HIS PRESENCE IN THE EMBASSY, DPA (HAVING BEEN TIPPED OFF BY ONE OF HIS CONFEDERATES) CARRIED A STORY ON HIM WHICH WAS PICED UP BY DEUTSCHE WELLE. A NOTE WAS SENT TO THE MFA SAYING THAT HE WAS IN THE EMBASSY AND ASKING FOR A POSITIVE DECISION ON HIS EXIT VISA APPLICATION. THE NOTE ALSO SAID HE HAD BEEN TOLD HE COULD NOT STAY IN THE EMBASSY AND THE EMBASSY HOPED HE WOULD LEAVE ON HIS OWN.

4. ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, A WEST GERMAN CORRESPONDENT BROUGHT TO THE FRG EMBASSY A LARGE NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS, LETTERS, AND PETITIONS ADDRESSED TO GERMAN OFFICIALS, TO THE RED CROSS, AND TO RELATIVES OF THE AUTHORS OF THE DOCUMENTS. THE PAPERS WERE SIGNED BY ETHNIC GERMANS LIVING IN THE BALTIC REPUBLICS. SOME OF THE DOCUMENTS WERE RECORDS OF COURT TRIALS OF MEMBERS OF THE GERMAN MINORITY ONE PETITION ASKING FRG OFFICIALS TO HELP THE GERMAN MINORITY IN THE USSR CONTAINED SEVERAL THOUSAND NAMES. FRG EMBOFFS WERE GREATLY IMPRESSED WITH THE CAREFUL ORGANIZATION OF THE ESTONIAN GERMAN MINORITY WHICH WAS REVEALED BY THESE DOCUMENTS.

5. ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, THE CONSULAR ADMINISTRATION OF THE SOVIET MFA CALLED IN AN FRG EMBASSY COUNSELOR AND GAVE HIM A STIFFLY WORDED ORAL STATEMENT "IN THE NAME OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MOSCOW 13958 141115Z

(UNDEFINED) LEADERSHIP." THE STATEMENT CHARGED THAT THE EMBASSY HAD TAKEN WAHNSIEDLER IN AND THENINFORMED THE PRESS. IT SAID THAT THIS ACTION HAD STRAINED BILATERAL RELATIONS AND ASKED THAT THE MAN BE IMMEDIATELY PUT OUT-SIDE THE EMBASSY.

6. ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, FRG EMBOFFS FINALLY PERSUADED WAHNSIEDLER TO LEAVE VOLUNTARILY, WHICH HE DID ABOUT NOON.

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

DURING THE TIME HE WAS IN THE EMBASSY, THE MAN DID NOT SPECIFICALLY REQUEST POLITICAL ASYLUM. FRG EMBOFFS HAD THE IDEA THAT HE WAS MAINLY INTERESTED IN STAYING LONG ENOUGH FOR THE PETITIONS AND DOCUMENTS TO BE DELIVERED TO THE EMBASSY. THE EMBASSY ALSO FELT ALL ALONG THAT HE WOULD PROBABLY LEAVE THE EMBASSY SHORTLY BEFORE GROMYKO DEPARTED FOR BONN, IN ORDER TO GIVE THE GERMAN PRESS ANOTHER STORY JUST BEFORE GROMYKO'S ARRIVAL. THE FRG EMBASSY CONSIDERS THAT, IN THE LIGHT OF THE FAIRLY ELASTIC WEST GERMAN APPROACH TO CITIZENSHIP, WAHNSIEDLER MAY WELL HAVE A VALID CLAIM TO GERMAN CITIZENSHIP.

7. COMMENT. THE FRG EMBASSY IS OBVIOUSLY RELIEVED THAT THE MAN DEPARTED BEFORE GROMYKO'S ARRIVAL IN BONN, THE EMBASSY TOOK GREAT PAINS TO TREAT HIM AN A CORRECT WAY WHICH WOULD BE DEFENSIBLE AGAINST ANY SOVIET CHARGES. THE EMBASSY HAS SENT THE DOCUMENTATION BROUGHT IN BACK TO BONN. IF U.S. OFFICIALS COULD GET A LOOK AT IT, WE SUSPECT IT WOULD CONTAIN A GREAT DEAL OF USEFUL INFORMATION ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF THE GERMAN MINORITY IN THE USSR AND POSSIBLY SOME INSIGHTS INTO THE MANNER IN WHICH THE SOVIET COURTS HAVE HANDLED DEMONSTRATORS SEEKING PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE.

8. THE SOVIETS HAVE NOT ALLOWED THE INCIDENT TO COLOR THE PRE-GROMYKO-DEPARTURE PRESS COVERAGE PRAISING DEVELOPING SOVIET-FRG RELATIONS. SIGNED COMMENTARY IN IZVESTIYA SEPTEMBER 13 MENTIONED VISIT AND DEVOTED MOST SPACE TO BENEFITS OF FRG-SOVIET ECONOMIC COOPERATION, MAKING NO MORE MENTION THAN USUAL OF ANTI-DETENTE FORCES IN THE FRG. SLIGHTLY LESS FAVORABLE SLANT APPEARED IN PRAVDA ARTICLE SEPTEMBER 14-- NOT DIRECTLY PEGGED TO GROMYKO VISIT--WHICH CRITICIZED CDU-GOVERNED LAENDER FOR PRACTICE OF BARRING COMMUNISTS FROM LAND GOVERNMENT JOBS.
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Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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